SOME

THOUGHTS

ON THE

BILL

Depending before the Right Honourable

THE

HOUSE OF LORDS,

FOR

Prohibiting the EXPORTATION of the Woollen Manufactures of *Ireland* to Foreign Parts.

Humbly offer'd to their Lordships.

DUBLIN,

Printed by *J. Ray* in *Skinner Row*, over against the *Tholsel*, for *Eliphal Dobson*, Bookseller in *Castle street*, 1698.

REASONS against the Bill for Prohibiting the Exportation of the Woollen Manufactures of Ireland, *to Foreign Parts.*

THE Bill for Prohibiting the Exportation of the Woollen Manufacture out of *Ireland* to Foreign Parts, being now under your Lordſhips Conſideration, I have preſumed to offer my Thoughts concerning it, and ſhall endeavour to ſhew it will be detrimental to the Intereſt of both *England* and *Ireland*. If this hath the end I deſign by it, I ſhall think my time well ſpent; If not, I hope the Sincerity of my Intentions will atone for my Inability of Performance.

I ſhall begin by ſhewing the great Advantages *England* reaps by the Trade of *Ireland*, that your Lordſhips may judge how little Reaſon there is to be jealous of them, and how tender this Nation ought to be of putting unneceſſary Difficulties upon them.

'Tis a common Saying amongſt us, that it would be well for *England* if *Ireland* was under the Sea; whereas I hope to make it appear, that *England* gets more by *Ireland* than by the Trade of the whole World beſides; and if in the late Reigns *Ireland* had not in a great meaſure ſupplied the Loſſes we ſuffer'd by the French, Indian and Eaſtern Trades, we had been long ſince undone, and it had not been now the common Debate of the Town how to undo them.

This will appear to be evident, if we conſider the Particulars relating to both Kingdoms.

Near a third part of all the Lands of that Kingdom, belonging to Engliſh Proprietors who inhabit here, and have their Rents conſtantly return'd in ready Money.

Beſides this, moſt of the Nobility and Gentry of *Ireland* ſpend their Eſtates here; they live no longer in *Ireland* than to raiſe a ſum of Money to ſpend here in their Pleaſures. This is the Seat of Government: Here are the Court and the Societies of Law: Here all the Nobility and Gentry come for Employments, Education, or Pleaſure; which Conſiderations alone would exhauſt that Kingdom, if it had the Riches of both *Indies*.

I will add to this, that *England* ſupplies *Ireland* with moſt of the Commodities they conſume; and notwithſtanding all our frights, there are nine in ten of that Country, that are able to buy it, clothed in Woollen Manufactures ſent from *England*, and in exchange we have very few Commodities from them; for their Cattle are prohibited, there are Impoſitions upon their Tallow, Leather, and Corn, which almoſt amount to a Prohibition; and laſt Year the Tonnage and Poundage was doubled upon their Linen and other Manufactures; and ſuch Commodities as are ſuffer'd to come from thence are either abſolutely neceſſary to us, or Materials for our Manufactures, as Wooll, Flax, Cony skins, raw Hides, Sheep-skins, Rape-ſeed, *&c.*

In times of Peace there was near 100000 *l. per annum* return'd neat to the Court, beſides the Charge of that Government; and ſince the War they have contributed to the Publick Charge as far as their late Misfortunes would ſuffer them, and without doubt in a new War will advance large Supplies of Men and Money, if we do not diſable them.

Beſides

Beſides this, moſt of the Trade of that Kingdom is carried on by Engliſh Stocks, and in Engliſh Bottoms; and a great number of their Eſtates are mortgaged to Engliſh Men at the unreaſonable Intereſt of ten *per cent.* They are but Factors, and moſt of the Profit redounds to us; they toil for our Advantage, they ſow and we reap.

I have enumerated theſe Particulars, to ſhew, that whatſoever *Ireland* gets by Trade from the whole World centers in *England*, and is returned hither by Bills of Exchange from *Spain*, *Holland*, *France*, the *Weſt-Indies*, and other places. If they gain'd ten Millions a Year, it would come to *England*; and if they get but ten Thouſand Pounds, we can have no more from them. They have no Mines of Silver and Gold, and therefore can ſend none to us but what they get firſt from others; and if we hinder them from making Advantages of other Nations, we can make none of them; ſo that what is loſt in the Pariſh is got in the Hundred. Nor is it poſſible that *Ireland* ſhould advance in Riches in any proportion to *England*, for the former Iſſues will draw away their Wealth as faſt as ever they get it: and this is manifeſted by twenty Years Experience before the War; for though they got a great many Millions over-balance from the reſt of the World, yet according to the beſt Computations they never had above three hnndred thouſand Pounds in that Kingdom.

The Particulars I have mentioned amount to above 600000 *l. per annum*, beſides the great Advantages we receive by being ſupplied from thence with Materials for our Manufactures, as before-mentioned. If ſo, I ſubmit to your Lordſhips, whether the Over-balance we have of the reſt of the World amount to as much more: If it does, I am ſure we ſhall quickly be a rich People; but

but if not, then how tenderly ought we to uſe a Nation that yields us ſo much Profit? There is a Mediocrity in Nature which we cannot exceed without deſtroying what we deſign to advance. Moderate Impoſitions raiſe large Sums, and great ones often raiſe nothing. We may ſheer our Sheep ſo cloſe, as to flee them that they ſhall never bear Wooll again. I have heard of a Man that try'd to bring his Horſe to live without Meat, and then he died. I wiſh this be not the caſe of *Ireland*, that we deſire to get ſo much from them, till at laſt we put them out of a condition to pay us any thing.

But there is another Conſideration which ſtrikes deeper yet; Whether by Bills of this kind we ſhall not make the Poſſeſſion of that Kingdom inſecure to us, and after ſo much expence of Blood and Treaſure at laſt throw it again into Iriſh hands.

My Lords I have heard but of two ways of keeping conquered Countries in Subjection, by Arms, or by Colonies

As to the firſt (beſides the Charge of it, which commonly eats up the whole Profit) I think few will deny but it is equally dangerous to the conquering or the conquered Country: There can be no Force in the Province but may be brought to the Mother Kingdom; and if they are ſufficient without other Aſſiſtance to keep one Country in entire Subjection, in time they will keep the other ſo too.

The other way is by Colonies, and this is the method that free Governments have always taken to ſecure their Conqueſts. This *Rome* did for four hundred years, till at laſt their Conqueſts were ſo large that their Government grew top-heavy, the Trunk was not large enough to ſupport its Branches. This our Anceſtors did to ſecure *Ireland*, and is the eaſieſt, leaſt chargeable, and leaſt dangerous Method.

Now

Now the eſtabliſhing Colonies, my Lords, is often done by eſtabliſhing the conquering Army on ſome part of the conquered Lands, ſometimes by ſending forth a number of your People to inhabit there; but always by giving them ſuch Encouragements, that it ſhall be their Intereſt to keep the Natives in ſubjection.

This is the caſe of *Ireland*, that after five hundred years contending, 52 Rebellions and Maſſacres, to the loſs of a Million of Engliſh, the conquering Army often planted in the Country, and multitudes beſides leaving *England* to inhabit there, almoſt the whole Kingdom is at laſt got into the Engliſh hands; and if we ſhould lay ſuch difficulties upon them, that they ſhould think it their Intereſt to leave the Country, or not be very ſolicitous for the Engliſh Intereſt there, I ſubmit to your Lordſhips great Wiſdom, whether that Kingdom may not hereafter give us freſh trouble. *France* is but a new Friend, and *Scotland* for late reaſons is not much in humour with us; and we know the whole North of *Ireland* is inhabited by that Nation, and multitudes of them go over every day, and will do ſo notwithſtanding this or any other Law that can be made.

I would not ſuggeſt ſuch improbable and ſuch wicked thoughts, as that the Engliſh of that Country ſhould join with them in any Intereſt but in ſubſerviency to *England*; but I hope I may ſay without offence that the better any People are uſed, the better Subjects they will make: And I believe no one will deny, if they had thought it their Intereſt to have joined with the late King, we had had much more trouble in reducing the Country. The Town of *Londonderry*, the *Iniskillen-men*, and the *Militia* of *Ireland*, had their ſhare, and a conſiderable one too, in bringing the Country to obedience.

No one knows what unhappy occaſions may ariſe in ages to come of difference between our Kings and People and therefore we ought to be tender how we make it the Intereſt of a whole Kingdom to be ſubſervient to the deſigns of a corrupt Court, who will offer them any advantages. Moſt of us have read, and ſome of us have ſeen with our Eyes, thoſe times that Courts have plaid *England* againſt *Scotland*, *Scotland* againſt *England*, and *Ireland* againſt both; and we have heard of the time, that an Iriſh Parliament hath been called to give Money to reduce an Engliſh one.

They are not contending for Power or great Riches; they neither Trade to the *Eaſt-Indies*, *Turkey*, or *Africa*; they have neither *Hamborough*, *Hudſons-Bay*, *Greenland*, or *Ruſſia* Companies; they have no Fleets or Plantations; they ask only the common benefits of Earth and Air. They deſire only to change their native Commodities for thoſe they want, and to manufacture a ſmall part of their own Product, which is a liberty ſeems to be allowed them by the Law of Nature, and which I don't find hath been denied by the moſt ſevere Conquerors.

And here, my Lords, I would diſtinguiſh between Colonies for Trade, and Colonies for Empire. The firſt is when a ſmall number of your people are ſent forth to plant Commodities which your native Country does not produce, as in the *Weſt-Indies*, or elſe when they are ſent to negotiate a Trade with the Natives, and build Forts for their Security, as in *Africa* and the *Eaſt Indies*. In both theſe caſes it hath been uſual to reſtrain their whole Trade to their Mother Kingdom; for there can be no other reaſon for their eſtabliſhment, and their number being ſmall, they will have ſufficient encouragement for all their Charge, Induſtry, and Hazard.

But

But Colonies for Empire ſtand upon quite different reaſons; they are always planted to keep great Countries in ſubjection, and prevent the charge and hazard of conſtant ſtanding Armies. Theſe have always received the utmoſt Encouragement, much leſs been reſtrained from making the beſt advantage of their natural Product, and having their whole Trade reſtrained to their Mother-Kingdom; but with humble ſubmiſſion, the Caſe of *Ireland* is yet harder: for by this Act they will be reſtrained to carry their Woollen Manufactures to Foreign parts, and the Impoſitions formerly laid, are ſufficient to hinder them from coming hither, ſo that they muſt carry them no where.

But my Lords, if we had deſtroyed the Woollen Manufacture in *Ireland*, is it neceſſary that all will be made in *England*, that is hindred from being made in *Ireland*? That's a Tartar's Conceit, that if they kill any man, they ſhall immediately enjoy his Wiſdom and Beauty; but I am afraid this will not be the Caſe of *England*: for *Holland*, *Scotland*, *Venice*, *Germany*, and *France*, pretend to the Woollen Manufacture as well as they; and *France* hath been always equal, if not ſuperiour to us, in their skill of making Stuffs: and can it be conceived that they will not ſhare, if not in a great meaſure engroſs the benefit we propoſe in the deſtruction of that Manufacture in *Ireland*? If ſo, then how much more will it be to our advantage to receive the whole profit at ſecond hand, than at beſt to divide it with other Nations, and chiefly with *France*, which hath always ſent Stuffs to *Spain* and *Portugal*, as well as *England*? and theſe are the only Nations I have heard of, which *Ireland* hath dealt with in that kind; and thô for a few years before the War, *Ireland* might increaſe in their Manufacture of Stuffs, yet it is very plain it was not upon the ruines of *England*, for thoſe Manufactures both then, and during the War, have advanced prodigiouſly here, as will appear by the Entries in the Cuſtom-houſe, as well as by

a greater consumption of them at home; and it seems a very hard case to hinder *Ireland* from enriching themselves, and in consequence this Kingdom, at the expence of other Nations.

But it seems we are particularly afraid of *Ireland*, because we are told they can under-work us, and send their Commodities to a Foreign Market cheaper than we; which is with humble submission is otherwise. 'Tis true, common labour in Husbandry is much cheaper there then here, but such as requires skill and knowledg is not so: and this is true not only in *Ireland*, but in all Countries thin of people for there cannot be brought together numbers enough to carry on any Manufacture with success; and if they could Stocks and Materials are wanting to set them to work: besides, naturally men choose rather to live in idleness and sloth than labour; and in poor Countries, where they can satisfy the ordinary occasions of life with little industry, they will hardly be perswaded to learn an Art, to which it will cost them seven years pains to attain; and those who give themselves that trouble, will be sure to be better paid than in a well peopled Country, where they must either work or starve. This is the reason that in the *West-Indies*, where the labour of a Black, is not worth above Six pence a day, yet an ordinary Artificer will earn a Crown, and sometimes ten Shillings. This is the reason that linnen Cloth doth not thrive so well in *Ireland* as in *Holland*, where common labour is three times as dear; and this is the reason that Woollen Cloth could never be made in *Ireland* so cheap as it is sent from *England*, notwithstanding Freight and great Customs paid there; which appears by their being never able to set up that Manufacture with success, most of the Gentry and *M*erchants of the Kingdom being cloth'd with English Cloth. They make only a few Stockings, Stuffs, and Frizes, which are different from those made in *England*, and the sale of them is more owing to the particular way of making them, than any advan-

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tage in the price; and yet notwithſtanding they ſend but very few abroad, it appearing by the Cuſtom-houſe Books of *Ireland*, that the Woollen *Manufacture* imported into *Ireland* from *England*, is ten times the value of what is exported from *Ireland* to the reſt of the World. But admitting they could work cheaper there, yet 'tis no conſequence they can ſell the *Manufacture* cheaper. There are ſeveral Foreign *Materials* neceſſary to it, which come cheaper to us than them: beſides, the difference of Intereſt gives us a great advantage. No man will imploy his Time and Stock in any *Manufacture* without trebling the common Intereſt of his *Money*. This Conſideration alone makes above fifteen *per cent.* difference: beſides, men upon ſmall *Stocks*, and in a poor Country, will expect to get much more in proportion, than upon great ones in a rich Country, becauſe there are ſo many ways in the former, of turning their money to advantage. Great Stocks and low Intereſt carry away the Trade of the World; and, as is obſerved by Sir *Joſiah Child* in his Book of Trade, where Labour is deareſt, there are moſt Manufactures, as in *Holland* and *England*, more than in any Countries in *Europe*, and in the Weſt of *England* more than the North. Whether this is the Cauſe or Effect, is not material, ſince 'tis plain that Dearneſs of Wages does not deſtroy Manufactures, but always is an Evidence that they thrive, as we experience every day, that when the Woollen Manufacture is moſt demanded, Wages run higheſt.

But they tell us, that *Ireland* will drein away our People; thô by the way they give but a ſcurvy Argument for it, when they ſay, they can earn leſs Wages there. Now, my Lords, I could be glad to know how many People have gone to *Ireland* that could live in *England*? Few Men leave their Country, their Acquaintance and Relations, but for neceſſity, becauſe they would not hang or ſtarve at home; Men who are in Debt, Unfortunate, or ſpent what they had; and if they

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had not *Ireland* to go to, would go to the Plantations, or else to *Holland* and other Countries, and be loſt to the Kingdom for ever.

But what ſhall thoſe men do, that are bred up to that Manufacture in *Ireland*, and underſtand nothing elſe? Men that have ſpent their whole Life-time in learning an Art, will not go to School again to learn a new one: They will rather leave their Country, and find another, where they may receive more Encouragement. They can't come to *England*, for the Laws of the Poor prohibit them to live in any Pariſh: *Holland* will receive the Proteſtants, and *France* the Papiſts; or perhaps they will go to ſome Country, and ſet up the Manufacture where 'tis not yet pretended to. All the Nations in the World would promote any Propoſition of that kind, and with open Arms receive thoſe who would give them any Aſſiſtance. 'Twas the Duke of *Alva*'s driving out the Flemins that ſet up the Woollen Manufacture in *England*, and the Perſecution in *France* hath very much improv'd it, and many of the French Proteſtants for want of Imployment in *England*, are gone to *Ireland*; and if we ſhould drive them and other Proteſtants out there, they will go ſomewhere elſe, where they will be ſure to be received: and the Conſequence to the Publick is the ſame, whether People leave their Country for fear of Perſecution, or becauſe they can't live in it; but the Conſequence will be much more fatal to *Ireland*, by driving out ſuch a number of Proteſtants, to the leſſening the Engliſh Intereſt there.

And after all, are we ſure, my Lords, this Act will anſwer the ends deſigned by it? I would not ſuggeſt ſo unbecoming a Thought, as that the Magiſtrates in *Ireland* ſhould not do their utmoſt to execute it, but that we find the Officers in other Countries are not over-zealous for the publick Intereſt when their own is concerned. Few Men are in any Imployments in *Ireland*, but either have or hope to have an

an Intereſt in the Country: and what probability can there be of having a Law well executed, when the Nobility, the Gentry, and the whole Body of the People have an Intereſt againſt it? We have an Inſtance of this in the Coaſts of *Kent* and *Suſſex*: for though 'tis the Intereſt of the whole Kingdom beſides to prohibit Wooll going to *France*, yet becauſe 'tis the Intereſt of a few hundreds that it ſhould, all the Laws made to the contrary have proved ineffectual; and in my humble Opinion it is worth your Lordſhips deepeſt Conſideration, whether this Law may not put *Ireland* upon negotiating a ſecret Trade with *France*, than which nothing can be more fatal to *England*. But there is another Country that pretends to the Woollen Manufacture nearer than *France*. *Scotland* lies but three hours ſail from *Ireland*, and the whole North of that Kingdom is inhabited by Scots, and if we ſhould put ſuch Hardſhips upon them, I am afraid it will not be an eaſy matter to hinder their trafficking with their Countrymen, which may be done in little Boats; and what is not work'd up in *Scotland*, may be ſent from thence to *France*. The whole Kingdom of *Ireland* thinks it as much their Intereſt as ours to prohibit the carrying their Wooll to Foreign Parts: but if we ſhould hinder them from ſharing in the Benefit of that Law, 'tis to be feared they will ſend it where they can get moſt for it, notwithſtanding this or any Laws that can be made to prevent it. Beſides, there is another thing worthy of Conſideration, whether if we ſhould hinder the People of *Ireland* from ſending any of their Woollen Manufactures abroad, they will not agree together to ſpend none but their own at home, which if they do, this Act will recoil upon *England* with a witneſs. The Bill prohibiting their importing Iriſh Cattel hath put them upon Navigation, and an extentive Trade with other Nations; and 'tis to be feared, if we ſhould hinder them from ſelling their Manufactures to other Nations, they will have Wit enough to ſpend none but their own in *Ireland*.

But

But if, my Lords, notwithſtanding all that may be ſaid, it ſhall be thought the Intereſt of *England* to deſtroy the Woollen Manufacture in *Ireland*, there is an eaſier and Gentler way of doing it. The Power of the Government is very great in that Country, and may give it ſecret Diſcouragements, and let it decline by degrees: they may divert it by ſetting up the Linnen Manufacture in the places where the Woollen moſt proſpers. Perhaps the Parliament of *Ireland*, now they ſee the Pleaſure of *England*, will do their Endeavours to divert their Stock and People to the Linnen Manufacture; but with the utmoſt *Submiſſion* I ſay it, that it ſeems too ſevere to tell them and the whole World in ſo ſolemn a manner, that they ſhall not Manufacture any of their own Product; it bears a Sting in the Tail of it, and teaches them this hard Leſſon, that whenever hereafter they with great Charge, Hazard, and perhaps forty Years Induſtry arrive to a degree of Perfection in any thing, if it appears to be the real or miſtaken Intereſt of *England* to ſuppreſs it, all their hopes and Endeavours muſt be daſht to pieces in a moment, their Cattle are already prohibited, their Corn, their Leather, their Tallow, are ſo in a great meaſure, they cannot come from the *Weſt-Indies* but muſt touch in *England*: But this Bill goes farther yet; it ſays, in effect, they ſhall not bring their Manufactures here, nor carry them any where elſe: why may they not expect that another Parliament will ſay, that the carrying abroad their Beef will leſſon the Price of our Beef, the carrying abroad their Corn will leſſen the Price of our Corn, and ſo the reſt of their Commodities; and with ſo much the greater probability, as they have the Precedent of this Act to juſtify the Reaſonableneſs of it; Nay, my Lords, 'tis the common Subject of the Pamphlets, and Diſcourſe of the Town, that it ought to be done already; and what Aſſurance ſhall they have that the Linnen Manufacture (which they are ſo often complimented with) will never

ver be ſet up in *England*? It hath been often attempted, and the want of Succeſs in my poor Opinion hath been more owing to the Stock-jobbing and ill Conduct of the Managers, than any reaſon from the nature of the thing: yet notwithſtanding a great deal of Linnen is made in *Lancaſhire*, *Weſtmoreland* and other Parts of the North of *England*, who begin already to grumble at the bringing in Flax and Linnen from *Ireland*. And if thoſe Countries ſhould improve in that Manufacture, I know no reaſon why it ſhould not be as much Juſtice to prohibit the Linnen Manufacture in *Ireland* as now the Woollen, and no doubt the Parliament will not want Petitions to that purpoſe; they trade in no Commodities that *England* does not produce, and if they muſt not trade in thoſe, they muſt trade in none; and then the Engliſh at beſt will quit the Country, and it muſt be maintained by vaſt Armies ſupported by the Men and Money of *England*; and even that is an uncertain Security, when all the Natives are their Enemies, and neighbouring Nations ready to aſſiſt them. But what ſeeems hardeſt yet is, that the People of *England* ſhould do that, now almoſt the whole Kingdom is in Engliſh and Proteſtants hands, which was never thought fit to be done whilſt in Iriſh and Popiſh.

I have often lamented that ſome method hath not been found out to make *England* and *Ireland* joyn hand in hand in the ſame Intereſt, that *England* may not look upon *Ireland* as Rivals of their Trade, nor *Ireland* upon *England* as ſevere *Maſters*, who would ſacrifice them upon every imaginary and perhaps miſtaken advantage. *I* doubt not but Expedients of this kind may be offered, but 'tis not now my Province, 'tis a Subject worthy of the Legiſlative Power, and your Lordſhips great Wiſdom; but I humbly conceive Acts to ruine their Trade will work a quite contrary effect, and make *Ireland* look upon *England* inſtead of their Protectors, as the check to all their endeavours, and the obſtacle to all their

hopes.

hopes. I know your Lordſhips are not to be diverted from your purpoſes by diſtant Surmiſes; but 'tis no diſhonour to appreliend juſt conſequences; for to fear nothing is as great an extravagance, as to fear every thing.

It's your Lordſhips noble Province in this Government under Heaven, to redreſs Grievances, to relieve the Oppreſſed, and not only to correct the Exhorbitances of Inferiour Courts, but to moderate the Exceſſes (if any ſhould happen) of the other parts of the Government; and 'tis to your generous compaſſion that is offered the condition of an unhappy Nation, who in the cauſe, and for the ſake of *England* have loſt their Fathers, their Children, their Brothers, their Relations; who have ſeen their Country every where on a light fire, their Cities and Towns laid in rubbiſh and aſhes, their Eſtates raviſhed from them, their Faith tortured, and their own blood ſpilt promiſcuouſly in the Fields and *L*anes, in the High-ways and Streets. Few have eſcaped this general deſtruction; and 'tis hoped you will not let thoſe few be in the condition of poor ſhipwrackt men on ſome Coaſts, who when they are thrown half dead a ſhore, meet their ruine from thoſe of whom they did expect relief. They are Engliſhmen ſent over to conquer *Ireland*, your Countrymen, your Brothers, your Sons, your Relations, your Acquaintance; governed by the ſame King, the ſame *L*aws; of the ſame Religion, and in the ſame Intereſt, and equally engaged in the ſame common cauſe of *L*iberty. And they hope this Nation that hath ſo lately eſcaped the fetters of Tyranny, will ſhew themſelves eaſy and Gentle Maſters to them; they hope you will not let them by their ſervice to *England*, their zeal to their Religion, their love to their *L*iberty, and by the loſs of their Stock, and benefit of their Eſtates for a great many years, purchaſe the loſs of them for ever.

FINIS.

AN ANSWER TO A LETTER FROM A Gentleman in the Country,

Relating to the

Present Ministry,

AND

Men in Employments.

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